

# MONTHLY REPORT FROM THE DIRECTOR



## Influenza (Flu) & Updated COVID-19 Vaccinations

We are rapidly approaching flu season, which typically peaks from December - February, and is once again overlapping with COVID-19. VA is continuing its strong stance on flu vaccinations. Last year, VHA Directive 1192.01 mandated that VA Health Care Personnel (HCP) are **required** to get an annual flu shot as a condition of employment. The Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Program for VA health care professionals helps protect vulnerable Veterans, coworkers, and loved ones who may be at high risk for severe complications from the flu as well as COVID-19. It is possible to get COVID-19 and flu at the same time. It is our duty as leaders and role models to do our part during the COVID-19 pandemic and getting your flu shot is just one more way we can step up for our Veterans and for our community.

## Veteran Vaccinations

Veterans do not have to have an appointment to get a flu shot at the medical center or clinics. This vaccination is offered on a walk-in basis at all of our nursing clinics throughout our downtown site, CBOCs and in the main lobby and in our DD building M-F from 8:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m. We encourage our Veterans to get their flu vaccine at one of our VHA facilities since this is the best option for proper documentation and evaluation from our health care team. However, Veterans are also able to get a free flu vaccine through one of our Community Care Partners. Information on our facility vaccine times, community care partner locations, and general flu FAQs is located on our website at <https://www.va.gov/charleston-health-care/programs/flu-vaccine/>.

## Updated COVID-19 Booster

The Ralph H. Johnson VAMC and our outlying clinics has started offering updated bivalent Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to Veterans, employees, spouses of Veterans, and caregivers who have completed a primary COVID-19 vaccine series. Our facility continues to offer Pfizer, Moderna, and Novavax COVID-19 vaccine for unvaccinated individuals. COVID-19 vaccines are provided at no cost. Please call 843-789-6500 today to schedule your Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine booster. For more information about updated boosters, visit <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/index.html>.

The CDC recently issued recommendations for getting an updated COVID-19 booster. The following people should get a booster:

1. Individuals 18 years and older who completed primary series vaccination with two doses of Pfizer-BioNTech, Moderna or Novavax COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months ago, or with a Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months ago. People who have received one or two prior booster doses are also eligible 2 months after their most recent dose. These individuals can get either a Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 updated booster.
2. Adolescents 12-17 years old who completed initial series or booster vaccination with a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine at least 2 months ago. Persons under age 18 can only get a Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for their initial series and for their updated booster.

**Scott R. Isaacks, FACHE, MBA**  
Medical Center Director

### UPCOMING EVENTS:

#### Columbus Day

October 10th

#### Blood Drive

October 12th

### SUICIDE PREVENTION TAKES EVERYONE!

*#BeThere*

**Veterans Crisis Line:**  
Dial 988 and Press 1

**Online chat at:**  
[www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

**Text:** 838255



**3,640**  
**Families Served**

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Ralph H. Johnson VA Health Care System



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If you received your updated booster outside of the VA, we encourage you to share this information with your VA health care team. You can do this by adding your vaccine information to your **MyHealtheVet** health summary for your own records. To add your information, you'll need a premium **MyHealtheVet** account. [Learn more about managing your COVID-19 vaccine records online.](#)

I want to extend my sincere appreciation for everyone's support and dedication to our Veterans and their families. We couldn't do what we do without you. Our VA is proud to be a part of this community and we are grateful to be able to work with our partners to care for our Veterans.

Lastly, I think it is important to stay in contact with all our Veterans and share news, relevant stories, and events. We do all of this on social media and encourage all of you to follow us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.

Respectfully,

Scott R. Isaacks, FACHE  
Director/ CEO

**VA**



**U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs**

Veterans Health Administration  
Ralph H. Johnson VA Health Care System